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## **Senate passes resolution to base congressional seats on legal U.S. residents only**

**LANSING** – The Senate today approved a resolution urging Congress to adopt a constitutional amendment that would ensure congressional seat apportionment is based on the census count of legal citizens only.

“Michigan is urging Congress to fix this fatal flaw in the current system of congressional apportionment,” said Sen. Jud Gilbert, resolution sponsor. “It is unacceptable that our state has lost and will continue to lose seats due to increasing numbers of non-citizens in other states. It is time for Congress to take a step in the right direction and correct this injustice that Michigan and other Midwestern and Northern states are facing.”

Senate Resolution 105 is in response to the impact that non-citizens are having on distribution of congressional seats. Seats are apportioned based on each state’s population, including both legal and non-legal residents. In 2000, the high presence of non-citizens in states such as Florida, Texas and California caused Michigan and other Midwestern states to lose seats to those states with larger populations.

Michigan lost seats in Congress following the 1980, 1990 and 2000 censuses. The 1982 reapportionment can be attributed to internal migration, but it has become apparent that since 1990, immigration has been the driving factor in reapportionment. In 2000, the large influx of non-citizens in states such as Florida, Texas and California caused Michigan and other Midwestern states to lose seats to those states.

While Michigan and other states have populations of more than 95 percent legal U.S. citizens, that’s not the case for all states. Some of the statistics are startling. Consider the 31<sup>st</sup> Congressional District in California where only 60 percent of the “persons” counted were listed as legal citizens. Incredibly, the remaining 40 percent can impact congressional representation even though they cannot legally vote.

“Continued loss of congressional representation for states like Michigan will have significant long-term policy impact,” said Gilbert, R-Algonac. “As an example, issues such as water diversion from the Great Lakes could be tilted toward Southwestern states like Arizona if the current apportionment system continues.”

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